

## CLUB LEADERSHIP

Club leadership starts with the president. To the president: If all your other officers are doing THEIR jobs, YOUR job has been accomplished. Virtually everything that needs to be “handled” by a club is handled by EVERY officer EXCEPT the president! The president’s PRIMARY/ONLY job is to follow-up making sure that his/her officers are doing THEIR jobs. For that reason, however, the ultimate success of the club falls squarely on the shoulders of the president. That doesn’t mean you can’t assist the other officers. As long as everyone feels their leader is “behind” them, they will be more eager to do their part—a boss says “Go!” a leader says “Let’s go!” They know that the leader is more than willing to offer assistance to anyone who needs it (there are times we have all appreciated another’s help...but that assistance should be to temporarily help them in doing what they should be doing...not in doing for them what they can/should do for themselves). Obviously, this assistance is offered just long enough for that person to get things running smoothly. If the task is a major one, the president can get one or more people to more “permanently” assist an officer (i.e. a committee). In one club, each officer has an assistant who helps that officer and is, essentially, preparing to possibly fill that officer position the following year!

In the Boy Scouts there is what is known as the “test” of a great scoutmaster, known as the test of the “Rocking Chair.” If the scoutmaster can spend the entire troop meeting in a rocking chair [not that he does] enjoying the meeting without having to handle things himself, he has done his job—he has taught his Senior Patrol Leader and Patrol Leaders and their assistants THEIR jobs...and they are, essentially, running the troop! Joseph Smith, a religious leader, when asked by a newspaper reporter how his people did so well, said: “I teach them correct principles and they govern themselves.” This is why Toastmasters promotes training so much—it is the essence of leadership...if the leader ensures that everyone receives the training they need to function in their roles, the organization will not only prosper, it will THRIVE! After ensuring this training, his/her role is problem solving (soliciting ideas from the other officers, jointly, and making decisions/plans) and FOLLOW-UP—a necessary “ingredient” of leadership.

Three of the greatest “tools” for effectively leading a club are: (1) the club plans (DCP),\* (2) the Area/District/Club calendar, (3) the written goals/plans of each club officer. With these “in hand”, all the president/officers need do on a routine basis is to review progress and have each officer follow up on their part of that progress!

Finally, the “overriding” factor for success in leadership is relationships and communication. Never let an opportunity pass by to recognize/express appreciation for a fellow club member/officer (or anyone else, for that matter)!

\* Distinguished Club Plan – developed by Toastmaster club officers, outlining the coming year’s goals for their club.